NARRATIVE

Narrative

Belchertown, situated on Route 9 just ten miles southeast of Amherst, is the second largest town, in area, in Massachusetts. First settled in 1731, it is the perfect blend of a quaint old New England town and a modern bedroom community. Its striking town green, ringed with white churches and colonial homes, is the site of band concerts, festivals and community activities throughout the year. The annual Belchertown Fair, one of the oldest continuously operated fairs in the country, takes place there each October.

Over a half-million visitors every year hike the trails and fish the waters of the Quabbin Reservoir. Five Connecticut River Valley towns were flooded in the 1930s to make way for this domestic-use reservoir, one of the largest and most spectacular in the country. Wildlife lovers flock there each winter to catch glimpses of the Quabbin's resident eagle population; they are also welcome at the state's McLaughlin Fish Hatchery just down the road, to learn about trout and salmon culture.

Residents feel that the jewel in Belchertown's crown is the Stone House Museum, a gracious 1827 stone structure containing period Connecticut Valley antiques and furnishings. Owned and operated by the Belchertown Historical Association, the museum is open two days a week from May through October and hosts social and educational events throughout the year.

Along with a traveler's own discoveries about scenic Belchertown, stone walls, ancient elms and maples and lovely homes can be found along the town's 180 miles of paved roads.

      (Narrative supplied by community)

![GEOGRAPHY icon] GEOGRAPHY

Location
Central Massachusetts, bordered by Palmer and Ludlow on the south, Granby and Amherst on the west, Pelham on the north, and the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware on the east. Belchertown is 13 miles east of Holyoke, 19 miles north of Springfield, 77 miles west of Boston, and 164 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 55.38 sq. miles

Land Area: 52.74 sq. miles

Population: 10,579

Density: 201 per sq. mile

Climate
(National Climatic Data Center)

(Amherst Station)
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    Normal temperature in January.....23.6°F
    Normal temperature in July........71.9°F
    Normal annual precipitation.......42.5"
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U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates
```
    Belchertown, Ludlow, Palmer, Winsor Dam
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Regional Planning Agency
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    Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
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Metropolitan Statistical Area
(1993 Definition)
```
    Springfield
```

GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices
```
Main Number: (413) 323-0403
```
Telephone Numbers for Public Information

Form of Government
```
Board of Selectmen
Executive Secretary
Open Town Meeting
```
Year Incorporated
```
As a town: 1761
```
Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

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                     Number      %
Total Registered      6,472


Democrats             1,831    28.3  %
Republicans             895    13.8  %
Other parties             3     0.0  %
Unenrolled Voters     3,743    57.8  %
```

Legislators

Senators and Representatives by City and Town

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000
Geographic Area: Belchertown town, Hampshire County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population..........................	12,968	100.0	**HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE**		
			Total population..........................	12,968	100.0
SEX AND AGE			Hispanic or Latino (of any race)................	204	1.6
Male...	6,313	48.7	Mexican................................	27	0.2
Female......................................	6,655	51.3	Puerto Rican.............................	118	0.9
			Cuban	12	0.1
Under 5 years	888	6.8	Other Hispanic or Latino	47	0.4
5 to 9 years	1,043	8.0	Not Hispanic or Latino	12,764	98.4
10 to 14 years	1,025	7.9	White alone.............................	12,357	95.3
15 to 19 years	844	6.5			
20 to 24 years	656	5.1	**RELATIONSHIP**		
25 to 34 years	1,673	12.9	Total population..........................	12,968	100.0
35 to 44 years	2,640	20.4	In households.............................	12,952	99.9
45 to 54 years	2,164	16.7	Householder.............................	4,886	37.7
55 to 59 years	540	4.2	Spouse	2,894	22.3
60 to 64 years	353	2.7	Child...................................	4,097	31.6
65 to 74 years	601	4.6	Own child under 18 years	3,383	26.1
75 to 84 years	437	3.4	Other relatives	356	2.7
85 years and over..........................	104	0.8	Under 18 years	97	0.7
			Nonrelatives	719	5.5
Median age (years).........................	36.3	(X)	Unmarried partner.....................	332	2.6
			In group quarters.........................	16	0.1
18 years and over..........................	9,429	72.7	Institutionalized population.................	-	-
Male.....................................	4,515	34.8	Noninstitutionalized population	16	0.1
Female...................................	4,914	37.9			
21 years and over..........................	9,033	69.7	**HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE**		
62 years and over..........................	1,339	10.3	Total households.........................	4,886	100.0
65 years and over..........................	1,142	8.8	Family households (families).................	3,519	72.0
Male.....................................	498	3.8	With own children under 18 years	1,895	38.8
Female...................................	644	5.0	Married-couple family	2,894	59.2
			With own children under 18 years	1,490	30.5
RACE			Female householder, no husband present.....	477	9.8
One race...................................	12,799	98.7	With own children under 18 years	321	6.6
White.....................................	12,467	96.1	Nonfamily households	1,367	28.0
Black or African American.................	105	0.8	Householder living alone	991	20.3
American Indian and Alaska Native...........	25	0.2	Householder 65 years and over............	342	7.0
Asian	125	1.0			
Asian Indian	21	0.2	Households with individuals under 18 years	1,969	40.3
Chinese.................................	34	0.3	Households with individuals 65 years and over ..	858	17.6
Filipino.................................	3	-			
Japanese................................	5	-	Average household size.....................	2.65	(X)
Korean..................................	18	0.1	Average family size.........................	3.09	(X)
Vietnamese..............................	9	0.1			
Other Asian [1]	35	0.3	**HOUSING OCCUPANCY**		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander....	6	-	Total housing units......................	5,050	100.0
Native Hawaiian..........................	5	-	Occupied housing units	4,886	96.8
Guamanian or Chamorro..................	-	-	Vacant housing units	164	3.2
Samoan.................................	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander [2]	1	-	occasional use...........................	48	1.0
Some other race	71	0.5			
Two or more races	169	1.3	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).............	1.0	(X)
			Rental vacancy rate (percent).................	2.2	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one					
or more other races: [3]			**HOUSING TENURE**		
White	12,623	97.3	Occupied housing units	4,886	100.0
Black or African American	157	1.2	Owner-occupied housing units	3,950	80.8
American Indian and Alaska Native............	105	0.8	Renter-occupied housing units	936	19.2
Asian	155	1.2			
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander......	7	0.1	Average household size of owner-occupied units.	2.78	(X)
Some other race	112	0.9	Average household size of renter-occupied units.	2.12	(X)

- Represents zero or rounds to zero.   (X) Not applicable.
[1] Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.
[2] Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.
[3] In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman)-
Town Stats - Free market Statistics

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)
DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

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Conventional State:      76
Conventional Federal:     0
```

Rental Assistance (DHCD 1999)

```
State (MRVP:              0
Federal (Section 8):     30
```

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Belchertown is located in the Pioneer Valley, known as the crossroads of New England because of its strategic location in the Connecticut River Valley and its excellent transportation facilities. The Massachusetts Turnpike connects the region to Boston and Albany, New York. Interstate 91 provides direct access to Hartford, Connecticut, and to Brattleboro and points north in Vermont.

Major Highways

Principal highways are U.S. Route 202 and Cross-State Route 9.

Rail

Amtrak's passenger service between Montreal and Washington, D.C., is accessible in neighboring Amherst. The Central Vermont Railway provides freight rail service. Contact number for the Central Vermont: (802) 527-3402

Bus

Belchertown is a member of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), which provides fixed route service between Amherst and Belchertown. The PVTA also offers paratransit services to the elderly and disabled through the Council on Aging. Belchertown participates in the PVTA Under-60 Program, which provides work trip transportation for the disabled.

Other

Metropolitan Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility in Palmer, has a 2,475'x 55' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision. Westover Metropolitan Airport, located in Chicopee, has 2 asphalt and concrete runways 7,050' and 11,600' long. Instrument approaches available: Precision and non-precision.

CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES
Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog

MUSEUMS
(American Association of Museums)

```
    The Stone House Museum
    20 Maple Street
    (413) 323-6573
```

RECREATION

Telephone Numbers for Public Information

Recreational Facilities(Recreational sites and activities)

Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section

Department of Housing and Community Development
Mitt Romney, Governor, Jane Wallis Gumble, Director

MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES
(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals
> None

Long Term Care
> None

Hospices
> None

Rest Homes
> None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.